



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glacier Bay National Park
and Preserve

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National Park Service News Release

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Whale Waters Update for Glacier Bay Effective July 13, 2013

BARTLETT COVE, ALASKA – Due to extremely high humpback whale densities, Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Superintendent Susan L. Boudreau announced today a reduced speed limit for cruise ships in all current “whale waters” in Glacier Bay. A speed limit of 10 knots through the water will apply to all cruise ships from **5 AM Saturday July 13** until further notice.

The new speed restriction applies only to cruise ships (defined by Park regulations Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart N, 13.1102 as “*any motor vessel of at least 100 tons gross (U.S. System) or 2,000 tons gross (International Convention System) certificated to carry more than 12 passengers for hire.*”) because of their limited ability to maneuver. Other types of vessels may still travel at speeds up to 13 knots through the water, but they are reminded that Park regulations state that “*The operator of a vessel inadvertently positioned within ¼ nautical mile of a humpback whale must immediately slow to 10 knots or less, without shifting into reverse unless impact is likely. The operator must direct or maintain the vessel on as steady a course as possible away from the whale until at least ¼ nautical mile of separation is established.*” The Park’s whale protection regulations are designed to reduce whale disturbance and the risk of whale-vessel collision. The best available scientific information indicates that reducing speed is the best way to reduce the risk of whale-vessel collisions. A slower speed gives the whale more time to react and move out of the way of the vessel.

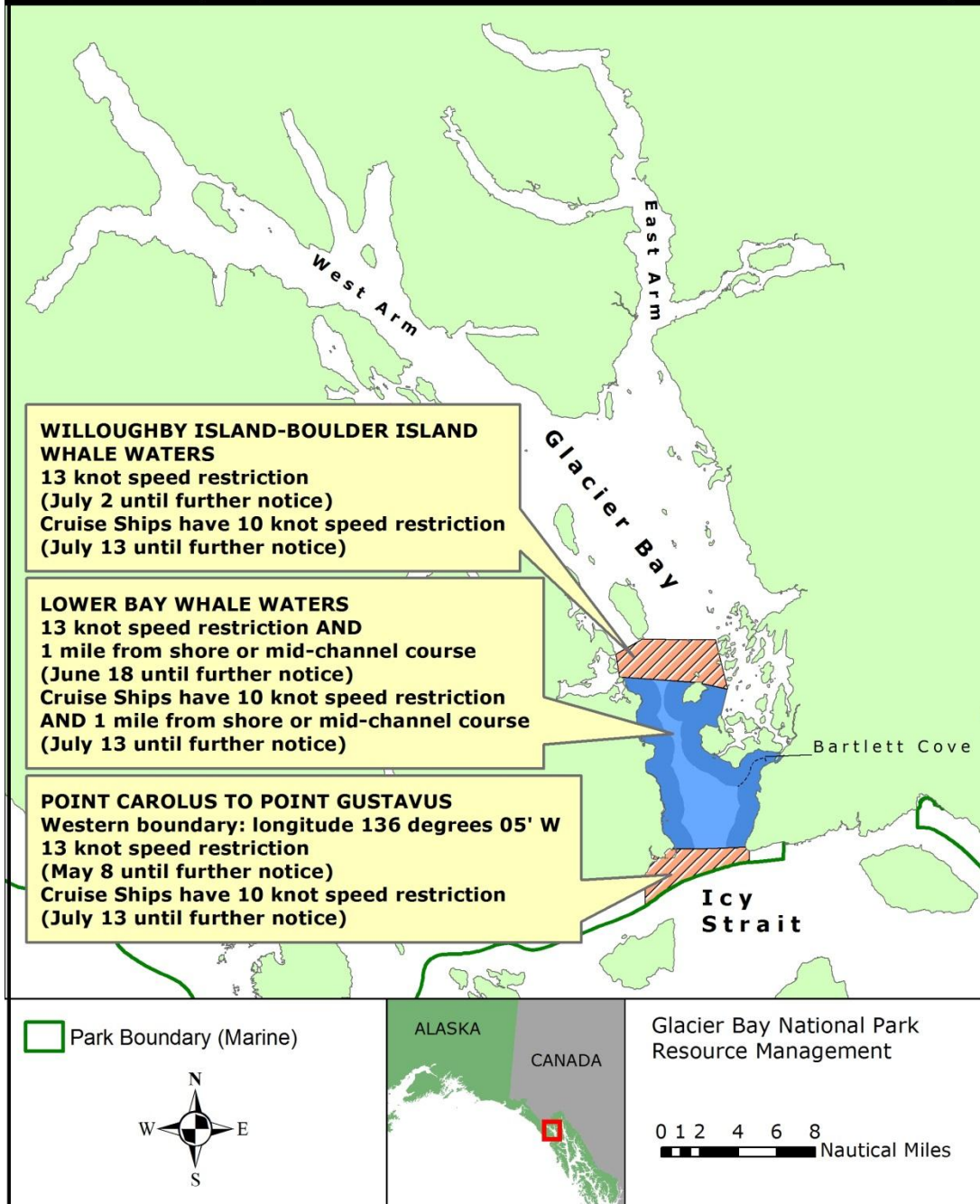
As shown on the attached map, current whale waters areas begin at the Park boundary in Icy Strait, and extend through the Lower Bay to an imaginary line between Netland Island, Willoughby Island, and continuing due east of Boulder Island to the Beardslee Islands motorless waters boundary. Vessels greater than 18 feet in length are restricted to a mid-channel course or one nautical mile offshore in the Lower Bay designated whale waters only. Boaters are advised to verify whale waters designations prior to entering Glacier Bay by telephoning (907) 697-2627 or by contacting KWM20 Bartlett Cove on marine VHF radio.

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Whale Waters in Glacier Bay

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